

Parcu, Frank

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Statues of Abraham Lincoln

Frank Porcu

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

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New Bust of Abraham Lincoln to be Unveiled at the New-York Historical Society: Life-Size Bronze Sculpture Considered a Milestone

Friday, April 5, 2013

prweb.com

New-York Historical Society to unveil a life-size bronze sculpture of Abraham Lincoln. Milestone project has generated a great deal of interest among Lincoln scholars and museum curators.



“ Our hope is that this new rendering will do for Lincoln’s image what Steven Spielberg’s ‘Lincoln’ has done to accurately convey Lincoln’s strong character and profound intellect.”

What is being described as one of the finest sculpted renderings of Abraham Lincoln to date is about to be revealed to the public. On Wednesday, April 3, the New-York Historical Society will unveil a life-size bronze sculpture of the 16th president. The artist, Long Island, New York sculptor and expert on artistic anatomy Frank Porcu, will be present for the event, at which the bust will be unveiled by legendary singer Tony Bennett, a long-time Lincoln admirer; and introduced by distinguished Lincoln historian Harold Holzer.

The project, which has generated a great deal of interest among Lincoln scholars and museum curators alike, was commissioned by Shawn Thomas, a Long Island-based collector of Lincoln manuscripts and iconographic materials, and the host of the event. According to Mr. Thomas, of all the images of Lincoln he’s examined, very few have conveyed “the essence of the man.”

“Our hope is that this new rendering will do for Lincoln’s image what Steven Spielberg’s ‘Lincoln’ has done to accurately convey Lincoln’s strong character and profound intellect,” Thomas said. “From the overwhelming praise we’ve received so far, we are greatly encouraged.”

Mr. Porcu, who has taught at Columbia University and is presently on the faculty of the Graduate School of Figurative Art at the New York Academy of Art, believes his sculpture is “the most physiognomic representation of Lincoln to date.” That’s because, he explained, “not only is my method based on scientific anatomical law that defines the construction of all human faces, my approach is unprecedented in the history of the craft, as each piece of clay is planned in advance, applied, and never touched again.”

Louise Mirrer, president and CEO of the New-York Historical Society, commented: “As an institution with a significant collection of Lincoln portraiture, we are pleased to be the venue for the unveiling of this latest example of the genre—particularly a work of art by a New York sculptor.” She announced that the bust will be on view for two weeks following the unveiling, “so visitors to the Historical Society can be among the first members of the museum-going public to see it for themselves.”

"I have seen many examples of Lincoln sculpture—made both from life and retrospectively—and to me, few convey both the lifelike realism and implied power and humanity of Frank Porcu's accomplished portrait. That a gifted young artist has devoted so much thought and skill to a Lincoln work is exciting news; that he has consummated it so successfully is cause for rejoicing. I've written much about the 'Lincoln Image' over the years. It's a major event to have a Lincoln image in bronze for the sesquicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's greatest legal and oratorical triumphs: the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address. Porcu's "Thomas" Lincoln, for which we also thank his generous and determined patron Shawn Thomas, gives us a piercing new look at the Lincoln we know from these triumphant accomplishments."

—Harold Holzer, Lincoln historian and Roger Hertog Fellow at the New-York Historical Society

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Abraham Lincoln, sculpted by Frank Porcu

Patron: Shawn Thomas

Introduced by Harold Holzer

Unveiled by Tony Bennett

Wednesday, April 3, 2013

6:30 PM cocktails, ceremony to follow

New-York Historical Society

170 Central Park West, New York, NY

For more information, please visit <http://www.frankporcu.com/painting.html>.

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Mastic Beach sculptor's bust of Lincoln draws praise

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Mastic Beach sculptor's bust of Lincoln draws praise



Photo credit: Danielle Finkelstein | Sculptor Frank Porcu recently completed a bust of Abraham Lincoln. (April 2, 2013).

In two decades as a sculptor and teacher, Frank Porcu has concentrated on art inspired by early Greece and the Renaissance. So when a would-be patron suggested he create a bust of Abraham Lincoln, the Mastic Beach artist initially demurred.

"It was extremely different" than any of his past work, the 40-year-old artist said.

But Porcu eventually sculpted a bronze bust that is receiving raves from historians for its accuracy and how it captures the power of the 16th president's character.

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Porcu's Lincoln was officially unveiled Wednesday night at the New-York Historical Society in Manhattan. Historian Harold Holzer, who's written 40 books on Lincoln and spoke at the event, said that Porcu's is the best three-dimensional likeness he's seen in his 40 years of studying the president.

"It's extremely powerful," Holzer said. "From any angle it reflects both power and sadness, and I think that's what Lincoln was all about."

The sculpture came about after Porcu was introduced to Shawn Thomas, a certified public accountant from Bay Shore who's a longtime collector of historical artifacts.

"I've been looking for a Lincoln sculpture that truly expressed the essence of the man," Thomas said. He thought Porcu could capture the real Lincoln -- proud and determined -- so he offered to pay for the sculpture and the artist's living expenses like a Renaissance patron.

"I said, 'Why? There are so many great Lincolns out there,' " Porcu said. "But he said, 'They don't show who I know Lincoln to have been.' And that was a challenge."

The two collaborated over six months, uninterrupted even when superstorm Sandy left Porcu's house awash in 2 feet of water, forcing him and his wife to live temporarily in Hicksville.

Most sculptors start with a block of clay and cut it away to unveil their vision.

But as a longtime student and teacher of anatomy and medical dissection, Porcu, who is on the faculty of the Graduate School of Figurative Art at the New York Academy of Art, said he envisions a piece from the inside out.

"Each piece of clay is planned in advance, applied, and never touched again," he said.

The bust will be on display at the historical society for two weeks. Thomas isn't sure of where it will go from there. But he and Porcu are already talking about collaborating on a different view of Lincoln or a sculpture of Theodore Roosevelt.



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